ROUGH TRADE

April 2016

Issue one

featuring Black Mountain
Charles Bradley
Ecstatic Peace Library
& Mica Levi on
Kate Tempest

Welcome to Issue One of Rough Trade Magazine

Rough Trade Magazine
Issue #1 – April 2016

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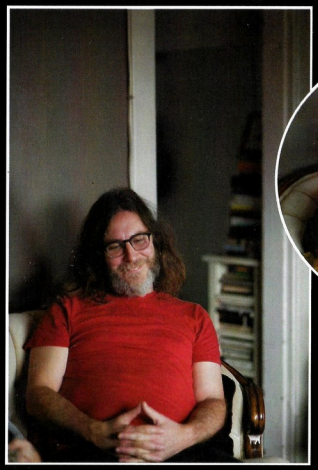


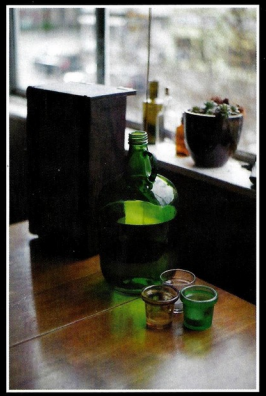
Words by Gregory Adams, Images by Jennifer Marignani

ROUGH TRADE'S ALBUM OF THE MONTH: BLACK MOUNTAIN – IV

It had been a morning full of heavy rainfall, but the Vancouver cloud cover begins to break as Black Mountain singer/guitarist Stephen McBean sits down for a cup of coffee across the street from new bassist Colin Cowan's apartment. A sleepy smile creeping through his bushy, salt-and-peppered beard, he admits to being a bit tired after a night of drinking with old friends. It's a familiar scene whenever he gets back into town from his adopted home of Los Angeles; his phone blows up with text messages about getting beers as soon as his plane lands.

Between sips of inky, recovery-mode java, McBean's left hand traces a faded and quaintly unprofessional-looking stick-and-poke tattoo on his opposing arm. At this particular moment, the one-word message reads like a mantra for the slightly hungover: Survive.

"That's half of a Discharge tattoo," he explains. "It's supposed to say 'Protest and Survive,' and I think it was supposed to have a skull with a mohawk. I got it from a skinhead roommate when I was 16, but he only did that and I'm glad. It stuck with me. Some friends bugged me that I should get a 'd' at the end.



CHOPIN
BARTÓK

As it stands, the skin art works in the present tense, considering McBean's a lifer in the underground music scene. Dating back to the early '80s, he's handled anything from playing crossover thrash in Jerk Ward to exploring the freakier side of folk with Jerk with a Bomb. He's currently maintaining a presence in California punk quartet Obliterations, his ever-evolving Pink Mountaintops solo project, and Black Mountain, the story crew he formed with a few friends after being inspired by a feverish dream around the turn of the century.

While the latter never really went away, the lead-up to Black Mountain's massive and psyche-smashing fourth full-length, ably titled IV, has been a long one. The quintet have toured since the release of 2010's Wilderness Heart, but most of the members' studio time since then has been spent with outside projects. In addition to McBean's prolific output, drummer Joshua Wells and vocalist Amber Webber prepped a pair of albums as Lightning Dust; keyboardist Jeremy Schmidt made a horror movie score under the name Sinoia Caves. And by the time they reconvened last year to record IV with temporary bassist Arjan Miranda who had been brought in following the departure of founding four-stringer Matt Camirand — a deluxe, 10th-anniversary re-release of their self-titled debut had just hit the shelves.

"We did all these different things, so when we came back we were all cleansed," McBean says with a chuckle, admitting of the gap between albums, "It doesn't seem like five or six years from the last one, or 10 years from the first one." As the rest of the band filters into the shop for their own caffeine fixes, McBean says Black Mountain are at the top of their game, further noting that *IV* has broken down a few mental barriers as far as what they can or cannot do. A few minutes later, they're all couched in recently instated bassist Cowan's instrument-lined living room, explaining how epic album opener *Mothers of the Sun* had once been a steady riff-fest before Schmidt recast the eight-and-a-half minute piece as a give-and-take of cinematic keyboard minimalism and magma-hot freak-outs.

"I did so at my own peril," the synth specialist says of stripping away the licks, sarcastically self-castigating the decision by calling the intro the "bullshit, three-minute pre-amble to the good part." Adding to the laughter quickly filling the room, drummer Wells brings up how disappointed YouTubers were expecting the solos to start flying from the jump. "If you want to hear guitars, skip to 3:28," the percussionist quotes of one apparently unimpressed follower, assuming a tone of mock derision.

That said, '70s arena rock sonics still smoke-up the joint on tracks like *Defector* and *(Over and Over) The Chain*. It's just that the group mixes things up via the paisley psych-folk supporting Webber's powerful vibrato on *Line Them All Up*, or with *Cemetery Breeding*, a stunningly lush pop strummer about, as McBean puts it, "fucking in the graveyard." On the flip, the viciously stomped *Florian Saucer Attack* envisions fields of the dead through binary code dream patterns. It's a musically-mixed bag for a band erringly labeled a straight-up stoner act.

While it could be argued that Black Mountain have always thrown oddball tracks onto their records (check out the freeform skronk 'n roll of their self-titled debut's opening *Modern Music*), Schmidt concedes that the quintet's approach has evolved strongly over the years.

"The shifts are slow," he theorises of the progression. "It's like tectonic plates moving, or watching paint dry, but hopefully less boring. You don't see the change until it's happened." Webber, meanwhile, praises the openness within Black Mountain's ranks that led to the full-figured *IV*, saying "it's nice to have everyone on the same page, and invested spiritually."

McBean adds, "It's nice to come back to Black Mountain too, because it's a band. When I do Pink Mountaintops, it's that thing where technically I'm the boss, but I don't really want to be the boss. I don't want to be in charge, I want to be in a band where I'm playing with people."

Whether keeping in mind the song structures or the makeup of the quintet itself, *IV* presents a combo deconstructed, rebuilt and climbing towards a new creative peak. As McBean's ages-old tattoo seemingly prophesised, Black Mountain continues to survive.

CHARLES BRADLEY
Changes
(Dunham Records / Daptone)

Who? Born in Florida, raised in Brooklyn, Charles Bradley has come from a childhood living primarily on the streets, working as a cook to performing James Brown routines as "Black Velvet" (he saw JB perform at the Apollo in 1962) when he was spotted by Daptone Records man Gabriel Roth. *Changes* is his third album (named after his cover of the Black Sabbath track) and is recorded with his current band the Menahan Street Band.

What? The rich, treacly sound of a classic Hammond-style organ. A preacher hollers and a rough gravel vocal cuts loose. These are true soul screams – gliding from rough to smooth to rich and earthy. Backed by classic golden brass riffing, smooth doo wop crooning and some funk that's just so damn...funky! Something for the emotions in everyone - from the breaking of hearts to the joy of get up and dance.

With... Marvin Gaye, Otis Redding, Screamin Jay Hawkins, James Brown, Jimmy Castor Bunch, Lee Fields, Sharon Jones & The Dap Kings

CULLEN OMORI
New Misery
(Sup Pop Records)

Who? Former Smith Westerns man Cullen Omori takes tight hold of the reins for his debut solo album primarily written, performed and overseen by his good self with some input from Ryan Mattos (keys/bass), Loren Humphrey (drums) and James Richardson (guitar).

What? A warm anticipatory hum beckons you closer into a lilting throbbing melody. Brassy harmonies polish classic songs floated loose on a sea of dreamy fuzz. Suddenly synths wiggle into the magical aura. These are misty mornings of sunny hazes of sound with dew drops of psych glimmer. This is more a mood than a sound, a peaceful otherworld of should-have-beens. Like driving over hills with summer meadows on either side in an open top car with your best friend at your side and the sea glistening ahead far, far in front of you. And a club full of sneakily electro-tinged heavenly pop songs waiting for you.

With... Beatles in *Strawberry Fields* mode, Mercury Rev, Bob Dylan, Flaming Lips, The Beach Boys in summer, Roky Erikson, Spiritualized when they're feeling blissed out, Eurythmics, Foxygen, Monkees (Porpoise Song/ Head) Comes with bonus mix CD of influences exclusive to Rough Trade

ROUGH TRADE'S ALBUMS OF THE MONTH

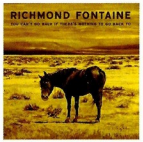
TIM HECKER
Love Streams
(4AD)

Who? Montreal producer/composer Tim Hecker (initially known for his minimal techno as Jetone) has produced copious amounts of music for Kranky, Mille Plateaux, Staalplaat and Fat Cat amongst others.

This is his first album on 4AD and was recorded at Greenhouse Studios in Reykjavik with Kara-Lis Coverdale and Grimur Helgason plus extra power from the Icelandic Choir Ensemble scored by Johann Johannsson.

What? Resonant synths shimmer like a city of glass swaying in the breeze of a wind of change. Strings ripple ominously and keyboards blur and distort with glitchy rumblings of menace. Choirs preside over a landscape of dark beauty and majestic foreboding while orchestral infiltrations flitter in and out of the shadows.

With... Stars Of The Lid, Fennesz, Jetone, Gas, Haxan Cloak, Aidan Baker, Daniel Lopatin, Julianna Barwick, Ben Frost



RICHMOND FONTAINE
You can't go back if there's nothing to go back to
(Decor Records)

Who? Richmond Fontaine were formed over 20 years ago in Portland, Oregon by author Willy Vlautin. It's been five years since they released their ninth studio album (*The High Country*) and they decided to release one more, tour it and then split up. Produced by John Askew at Flora Studios you can hear Sean Oldham (drums), Dan Eccles (guitar), Paul Brainard (pedal steel), Freddy Trujillo of The Delines (bass), Jenny Conlee of The Decemberists (keyboards) and former bassist Dave Harding (guitar) one more time.

What? Firstly - that guitar is lush! Rich and warm with every note resonant and sustained drifting dreamily like a sun-lit mote of sunny joy to your ears. The band kicks in with the glorious, weathered Americana that's made them such heroes and rough-hewn vocals limber up to tell you a story.

With... Rod Stewart, Mark Eitzel, Pogues on their ballad kick, Richard Buckner, Jim White, The Delines, The Jayhawks, Drive-By Truckers, Green On Red, Gram Parsons, The Decemberists, Willie Nelson

MODERAT
III
(Mute)

Who? Berliners Modeselektor (Gernot Bronsert and Sebastian Szary) teamed up with Apparat (Sascha Ring) for fun over 10 years ago. Getting together intermittently around their own successful musical lives they've advanced through various release to this album, which you may just able to figure out... is their third.

What? The trepidatious sounds of the whirring and stirrings of valves and the awakening of strangely and alluringly warm zombie/robot automatons. Make way for slippery smooth vocals, shimmering pianos and body-soothing beats. You can dance all night to anthemic uplifting dance, frug-chug grooves built of layered electronics and rich harmonies built from breathy vocals. Skilfully assembled but easy to love.

With... Modeselektor, Apparat, T. Raumschmiere, Shitkatapult, Trentemoller, Radiohead, Ellen Allien, Nathan Fake, Darkside, DJ Koze, Nicolas Jaar

ROUGH TRADE'S ALBUMS OF THE MONTH

FUMAÇA PRETA
Impuros Fanáticos
(Soundway Records)

Who? The Amsterdam-formed group consisting of Alex Figueira (drums/percussion and now vocals), Stuart Cart (guitars/moog/organ) and James Porch (bass) keeps on pushing and blending sounds. This second album has samples from the left-behind workings of an abandoned desert factory, late-night voodoo chants from a remote village on the Brazilian border and steel drums recorded in a Czech, disused military base amongst other precious, sonic finds.

What? Dance your mind out of its skull-socket to psych tropicalia from other planets and your arse WILL follow. Funky flutes crawl through your speakers slowly warming up, waking you up to declamatory passionate vocals. A secret spy (in a Zorro mask, most likely) plays a ghost town riff on a fairground organ. Crashing dub sound quakes accompany the ride of your life on the festival samba waltzer.

With... Goat, Os Mutantes, Mothers Of Invention, Moon Duo, *Vampyros Lesbos OST*, Tom Ze, Funkadelic, Gilberto Gil, Jimi Hendrix, Country Joe & The Fish

YEASAYER
Amen & Goodbye
(Mute)

Who? Brooklyn-based Chris Keating, Ira Wolf Tuton and Anand Wilder recreated/recorded their fourth album at Outlier Inn Studio in New York with production help from Atoms For Peace drummer Joey Waronker after their original recordings were damaged in a flood.

Guests include vocals from Suzzy Roche of Yeasayer favourites The Roches, percussionist Mauro Refosco and guitars from Delicate Steve's Steve Marion.

What? A glorious blend of eerie sublime harmonies swells into a majestic kids chorus of psych-pop joy. A cascade of piano notes tumble forth, lovely harmonies layer and then layer again into a tapestry of kosmische and offbeat pop. Yeasayer build a cathedral of beautiful, artful sound arched with wiggy synth lines and major pop sensibilities.

With... Here We Go Magic, TV On The Radio, Queen, Django Django, Beatles on a psych trip, Strawberry Alarm Clock, tUnE-yArDs, Aha, Gang Gang Dance, Caribou, Polica, Unknown Mortal Orchestra

MAGNETIC NORTH
Prospect of Skelmersdale
(Full Time Hobby)

Who? Orcadian singer-songwriter Erland Cooper (Erland & The Carnival) teamed up with his fellow E&TC member Simon Tong and solo artist/arranger Hannah Peel to become The Magnetic North and record the album *Orkney*: Symphony Of The Magnetic North inspired by Erland's hometown. This follow-up album is inspired by Simon's hometown Skelmersdale: the UK Northern new town that became the official UK home for transcendental meditation.

What? A gorgeous patchwork of sweetly solemn strings, majestic celestial choirs (far-reaching mountain ranges filled with hymnal singers) and fairy tale whispers. Ghosts of the past mingle with flowing flute melodies and violins that build architectural delights in sepia over pastoral meadows. Interjections of polite '60s announcers add to the nostalgic whimsy and sooth with their everyday information. A feel of times past from rich brass burnished with the hope of the young and the glimmer of the new in this musical travelogue

With... Kishi Bashi, Belle & Sebastian, Peter And The Wolf, Brian Cant, Erland And The Carnival.

Limited copies of this come with a live 7-track CD at Rough Trade

EXPLOSIONS IN THE SKY
The Wilderness
(Bella Union)

Who? Christopher Hrasky (drums), Michael James (guitar/bass), Munaf Rayani (guitar) and Mark T Smith (guitar) are based in Austin, Texas. This is their sixth album and was co-produced by none other than Grammy-award winning John Congleton.

What? Minimal tremors of sound travel down aural cortexes into deep caverns of bass and panoramic sweeps of guitars. Gloriously celebratory with dynamics that are loud yet quite - a triumphant army of fighters marching for peace. Like a swan; gracious and noble on the smooth surface, but a powerhouse frantically pedals underneath to keep everything aloft. The lack (though lack makes it sound like a negative which it isn't...) of vocals leaves more space for calming thoughts to swoop around your brain on gentle breezes of drums. Peaceful and bombastic simultaneously.

With... Mogwai, Sigur Ros, Do Make Say Think, The Cure, Godspeed You Black Emperor, And So I Watch You From Afar, Fleetwood Mac, A Silver Mt. Zion, Peter Gabriel, Her Name Is Calla

— Words by Delia Sparrow

Writer, poet and friend of Rough Trade Will Burns invites one fellow wordsmith to respond to one of Rough Trade's Essential Albums. Up this month is Martha Sprackland who has chosen The Fall's Hex Enduction Hour

Martha Sprackland grew up on Merseyside and lives in London. Her work has been published in the London Review of Books, Poetry Review, Poetry London, the Quietus, New Humanist and elsewhere, and in anthologies including Best British Poetry and the Salt Book of Younger Poets. She was given an Eric Gregory Award in 2014. Martha was co-founder and poetry editor of Cake magazine, and is now assistant poetry editor at Faber & Faber.

I first met Martha, quite appropriately, in a bar. Not just any bar, actually, but The Social, where she was drinking with her new colleagues at Faber. She seemed a natural fit for the first of these columns: smart, funny and capable of writing excellent, interesting poems. I just hope we can carry on at the high standard Martha has set with her poem here. I asked her a few questions about the album she chose to work from, The Fall's *Hex Enduction Hour*. Her answers are, I'm sure you'll agree, rather good.

WB: Perhaps we should start with a bit about your choice of album... why that particular record? MS: There's something about The Fall's sound, balanced on the edge of chaos, that does something counterintuitively nourishing to my brain. The way everything pulls away from and then swings back towards the rhythm, which seems always on the verge of falling into disarray. The exuberance, too, I love. I remember a friend and I at university turning all the lights off in my room and slam-dancing into everything, listening to The Fall, making a mess of the room, throwing beer everywhere. **How do you think or feel about music as an art form? Do you use it in the same way as literature, or do the two perform different functions for you?** They're very different. Partly because I'm not a musician. For me, though, music is chemical, it changes your chemistry in a way that literature doesn't necessarily. When I read a fucking brilliant poem I don't necessarily find it mood-altering, I appreciate it for something else – like a piece of perfectly functioning machinery, like one of those little metal music boxes, like something beautifully constructed. Or like something natural – a complicated seed pod or intricate spiral shell or something. I think what music does is it alters the balance of chemicals in your blood, tipping it subtly towards either warmth or cold, or volatility, or viscosity, or effervescent, or abrasive, or corrosive, or anaesthetic, tipping it between anger and euphoria and blue Tuesday fear and the sort of deep calm you get from lying in hot water or moving as part of a rave crowd. Sometimes just a little drop of something reacts with something else and turns your mood on a single point, like the upspiraling note at the end of some of Jeff Buckley's tunes, or a tiny, perfect discord in an otherwise whistle-clean harmony. **How did you use the album you chose as a basis for the poem? Was it a process you've explored before, using a piece of music as a starting point for writing?** I've never done it before. I'll try it again, though. To write this I just cleared everything else off my music and walked around listening to it very loud for a few weeks. I kept remembering that they recorded a couple of songs, or maybe just one song, in a recording studio built into a cave in Iceland, and one in a cinema, and that bit of information stuck in my mind. And I'd been reading a few months back about these unidentified sounds that the NOAA list – with brilliant names like Upsweep and Bloop and Julia. Actually, I found this poem near-impossible to write. I kept trying to make these scraps and flashes of quite abstract thought come together as a poem. I think it wanted to be quite disparate, quite chopped-up, like it'd been through a meat mincer. So in the end I squared everything off, like a box of bees, and let them fly around in that space until I thought the chaos was happy with itself. So it was a totally different process to my usual, where I tend to just write straight through a narrative from start to finish. This is more like a yawp.

ROUGH TRADE: ESSENTIALS

Hljóðriti / Hitchin

black drum kick at the dome of the ice
honestly I've never felt better in my life
than when smashing a hole in the face
of a lake with a stone or a brick
like a track with a hook from the wind or the rain
unidentified thunder from inside the whale
fat submarines scoring the ocean floor
sucking energy from the mainland for
the ramshackle set-up in the packed gymnasium
for the padded room for the cinema screen
and the student halls with a door off the hinges
where the drum shakes loose like a whining drill
brick dust and lava dust any minute now
the whole thing comes down kickdrum flinch
shakes the blood ice in a cocktail shaker
cells breaking apart on black Arctic water
the snake of a copper wire pouring out
like lights in the sky through the hole in the roof
dizzy with ice *look* don't tell me there's anything
romantic in the green and pink and yellow
lying fucking threads of light instead the drum
the noise never felt better in my life

THE BRUTAL MUSICAL LEGACY OF JG BAL-LARD

To celebrate the release of Ben Wheatley's adaptation of High-Rise, Tim Noakes speaks to musicians whose work has been directly inspired by Brutalism and the work of JG Ballard.

Words by Tim Noakes

In March 2016, Ben Wheatley's adaptation of JG Ballard's *High-Rise* hit our cinemas, featuring Clint Mansell's most haunting score since *Black Swan*, a chilling cover of ABBA's *SOS* by Portishead, and a soundtrack peppered with CAN, Amon Düül, The Fall and Deutsch Amerikanische Freundschaft. While mainstream film homages to Ballard's books have been few and far between – the last one was David Cronenberg's *Crash* in 1996, and before that Steven Spielberg's *Empire of the Sun* in 1987 – the late author's influence on contemporary music culture has remained consistent and thrillingly diverse since the early 1970s.

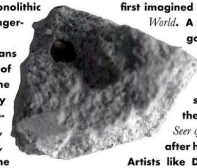
Unlike his literary peers who focused their science fiction tales on laser-toting lycra-clad spacemen in galaxies far, far away, Ballard's novels *The Atrocity Exhibition* ('70), *Crash* ('72), *Concrete Island* ('74) and *High-Rise* ('75) amplified the harsh realities of urban life. As the UK made strides towards post-war modernity with the proliferation of motorways and brutalist tower blocks, Ballard somehow managed to make the prospect of living in and amongst these monolithic concrete structures sound dangerously alluring.

Disaffected young musicians empathised with his view of the world and throughout the 1970s and '80s artists like Joy Division, The Normal, Cabaret Voltaire, Hawkwind, David Bowie, Gary Numan, Grace Jones, John Foxx, The Human League and This Heat crafted visceral songs directly inspired by his nightmarish "inner space" prose. With their "No Future" slogan, The Sex Pistols, formed the same year as *High-Rise*'s publication, became the quintessential dystopian poster boys. "I can see the connection between Ballard and punk," says film director Ben Wheatley. "It was an absolutely new voice looking at the modern world and smashing it up. Ballard wasn't afraid of the chaos either." At the same time in the east end of London, Throbbing Gristle were busy creating industrial music by sampling the sounds of the streets and fusing it with white noise.

The early '90s saw Ballard's brutalism become adopted by Suede, who tipped their hat on *High Rising*, the last single from their self-titled debut album.

In 1994, the Manic Street Preachers sampled the author talking about *Crash* for their album, *The Holy Bible*. In the introduction to *Mausoleum*, Ballard can be heard solemnly intoning: "I wanted to rub the human face in its own vomit, and then force it to look in the mirror".

After the Millennium Bug failed to end life as we knew it, electro-clash stars Ladytron kick-started a renewed wave of interest in the author with their 2005 song, *High Rise*. As the decade progressed, grime and dubstep grew in popularity through London's pirate radio culture, itself synonymous with inner city tower blocks. In 2006, one of the scene's leaders, Kode9, gave a talk on the "Sonic Fiction of J.G. Ballard" and also released Burial's eponymous debut record on his label, Hyperdub. With its infinite rain and desolate beats, the album conjured up imagery of a metropolis being submerged under water following an ecological disaster – a narrative first imagined by Ballard in 1962's *The Drowned World*. A year later, The Klaxons would go on to scoop the Mercury Prize for their album *Myths of the Near Future*, named after one of his short story collections. Aussie synth-pop conceptualists Empire of the Sun would pay lip service to the *Seer of Shepperton* by naming themselves after his 1984 book.



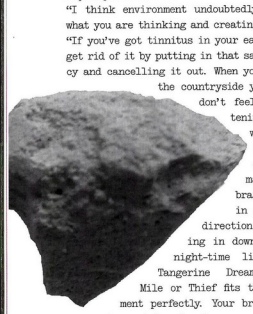
Artists like Death Grips, Arca, Prurient, and Roly Porter have twisted electronic music into strange new interzones since, but perhaps the most Ballardian musical concept of the last five years has been "Gulf Futurism," spearheaded by avant-garde artist Fatima Al Qadri. Juxtaposing abrasive sinogrime rhythms with video art that subverts the ideology of shopping malls, desert skyscrapers and even sexting culture, the Kuwait-born musician's songs are the perfect embodiment of Ballard's "future of the next five minutes" approach to fiction. Her latest album, released in March on Hyperdub, is somewhat fittingly entitled, *Brute*.

With brutalism back in vogue and the film of *High-Rise* poised to trigger off yet another wave of interest in the author's extraordinary novels, Tim Noakes helped Rough Trade track down 10 artists whose music has been created in or influenced by the aesthetic of inner city tower blocks.

CLINT MANSELL

Clint Mansell first discovered JG Ballard's *High-Rise* via *The Atrocity Exhibition* at school. "At the time I wanted to become invisible," he recalls. "He created characters whose observations about the world resonated with me." When Mansell formed Pop Will Eat Itself in 1986, he found himself on the dole and living on the 19th floor of Byron House, a brutalist tower block just outside of Stourbridge. "It was full of a lot of youth, but also the cast offs of society. It was punk. We had no responsibilities. We could do what we like," the Grebo pioneer remembers fondly.

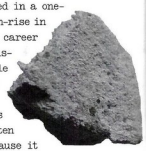
Now living in Los Angeles, Mansell has composed the scores for films such as *Black Swan*, *Requiem for A Dream* and most recently, *High-Rise*. "I think environment undoubtedly influences what you are thinking and creating," he says. "If you've got tinnitus in your ears, you can get rid of it by putting in that same frequency and cancelling it out. When you go out in the countryside you probably don't feel like listening to Nurse with Wound because the environment makes your brainwaves go in a different direction. But driving in downtown LA at night-time listening to Tangerine Dream, Miracle Mile or Thief fits the environment perfectly. Your brain latches onto certain visual nuances and music plugs into what's making all your neurons and synapses fire."



ACTRESS

Like Clint Mansell, avant-garde electronic artist Actress grew up in the Midlands, surrounded by factories. His Dad worked at the Goodyear tyre plant for the duration of his life. "It was industry at a very working class level, people didn't have smiles on their faces day to day," he recalls. "That definitely influenced my music. It has always had an air of melancholic isolation."

Moving to London, he lived in a one-bedroom council flat in a high-rise in Brixton before his musical career took off. He still empathises with the idea that people in high-density urban areas are drawn towards extreme music as much for therapy as entertainment. "I could listen to white noise all day, because it recalibrates you. As technology has gotten better, everything is fine-tuned. Clear signal, high definition. I prefer pure noise."

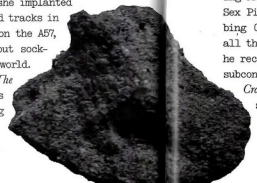


In February, Actress played at the high temple of brutalism – The Barbican. Collaborating with the London Contemporary Orchestra, he premiered classical reinterpretations of his acclaimed brand of techno. What made it extraordinary was that they created new sounds inspired by the shapes of the actual building, from abstract motifs on the orchestra's sheets to synthesized sine waves that resembled the tower's outline. "What I wanted to do was use the shapes of the interior and exterior of the Barbican estate to influence the sound that people experienced inside the building. I wanted to take a brutalist approach to making music, like Iannis Xenakis."

LONELADY

LoneLady recorded *Hinterland* in her flat on the seventh floor of a Manchester high rise. Or as she lovingly calls it, the Concrete Retreat. "Since I was 18 I've lived in a tower block," the Warp Records artist says. "You are aware of people on all sides, above and below you. You hear unexpected, ridiculous and also traumatic things."

After discovering JG Ballard through Joy Division's song *The Atrocity Exhibition* (named after his 1970 novel), the post punk artist became obsessed with the "abject strangeness, tension and sense of psychosis" that permeated his books. Taking her brutalist sound experiments further than most, she implanted an mp3 player of unreleased tracks in the wall of an underpass on the A57, with just a headphone input socket exposed to the outside world. She called the project, *The Utilitarian Poetic*. "There was something very satisfying about sending people to a forlorn patch of ground by the side of the Mancunian Way to stand in an odd position, lone, only able to experience the music in a solitary way, leaning into the concrete."



GENESIS BREYER P-ORRIDGE

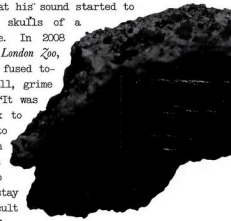
As the driving force behind Throbbing Gristle and Psychic TV, Genesis Breyer P-Orridge helped create industrial music in the mid 1970s. An icon of experimental art, s/he has embraced a pandrogynous existence since 1993, referring to h/erself in the plural and physically identifying as "third gender." But surprisingly, Ballard's work has never consciously been an influence. "No, we were more into Burroughs and Burgess," s/he says with a laugh.

Next to Throbbing Gristle's old studio in London Fields now stands a huge 16-storey residential high rise. "Is there?!" s/he exclaims, gazing out of the windows of h/er sixth floor Manhattan apartment. "That area was once the source of industrial music. There were all these workshops under the railway arches, and next to them was the All Nations Clubs. On the weekend it was loud as fuck and all these people parked their cars on the pavement outside our building, yelling, and beeping horns. The place was in sonic turmoil. We (TG) thought, 'How can we manipulate this so that it's not abrasive in that way that it makes your nerves on edge, but somehow reconfigures the experience so it's acceptable, and even creative?' By doing that we (TG) created a new kind of music. The fact that it is endlessly mutating to this day around the world and influencing labels, DJs, clubs, and clothes suggests that we were speaking a new language – but it was a language people understood. We were the white noise of the city."

THE BUG

Growing up in Weymouth, Kevin Martin was introduced to JG Ballard's books after becoming obsessed with post-punk, Joy Division, the Sex Pistols, the Birthday Party, and Throbbing Gristle. "I would try and investigate all their cultural influences and references," he recalls. "Ballard was a submariner of the subconscious. The 'Urban Disaster' triptych of *Crash*, *Concrete Island* and *High-Rise* literally scarred me for life"

Having recorded under different aliases such as GOD, Techno Animal and Ice, it was as The Bug that his sound started to penetrate the skulls of a wider audience. In 2008 he released *London Zoo*, an album that fused together dancehall, grime and dubstep. "It was the soundtrack to my struggle to keep afloat in London. It was the score to me trying to stay sane in difficult circumstances."



Before deciding to leave London for Berlin, he lived on the 18th floor of the Balfron Tower in Poplar, reputedly the inspiration for the brutalist building at the centre of *High-Rise*. "A guy on top of us screamed in absolute agony several times per week, and at very regular times, like a terror alarm," he recalls with a shudder. "Living there felt like incarceration. Paranoia, fear and dirt may have been good for my musical inspiration, but I was happy as hell to get out of that environment. It subconsciously polluted my mind with the realisation that my choices were low, my finances were lower and the urge to escape was high."

KODE9

Kode9, the boss of Hyperdub Records, is one of the most influential musical Ballardians of modern times. A founding father of dubstep, his collaborations with The Space Ape on albums like *Memories of the Future* took listeners deep into the mindset of the UK's post-7/7 surveillance state. He has also written a book on audio weaponry (inspired by the author's short story, *The Sound Sweep*), and given a keynote speech about the author's sonic fiction. "I don't think there are enough high rises in London," he says. "But very few of the new developments seem to be social housing. Rather they seem to be exactly the kind that Ballard describes which are liable to be populated by feral,

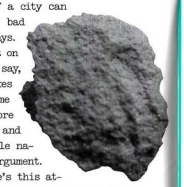
KANO

Kano didn't grow up in a tower block, but they've made him the artist he is today. After debuting his first ever song on Déjà Vu – a pirate radio station located in a Stratford high-rise – he signed a deal to 679 Recordings and in 2006 released his first album, *Home Sweet Home*. 10 years later, he's regarded as one of grime's most influential pioneers and has carved out a second career as an actor with film roles in *Tower Block* and *Rollin' With The Nines*, and as Sully, a drug dealer in Channel 4's acclaimed inner city drama, *Top Boy*.

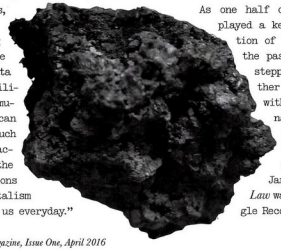
"The architecture of a city can have both a good and bad effect on you," he says. "There's a line about it on my new album in which I say, 'If this estate had lakes and green fields.' It's me asking, would we be more open-minded, relaxed and peaceful? It's that whole nature versus nurture argument. Where I come from there's this attitude that we're not supposed to amount to anything, that the world's against us. Some people fall in line with that way of thinking, and others rebel against it. Luckily for me, it inspired me to make the most of my situation. I made a positive out of a negative, and so did a lot of my peers. I mean, who would have thought a flat in a tower block would have birthed a Dizzee Rascal?"

bored middle classes in meltdown. The problem, of course, is who gets to live in the current wave of overpriced luxury blocks that are going up."

In 2006 he released Burial's eponymous debut album, a conceptual record about a submerged metropolis that Kode9 likened at the time to Ballard's novel, *The Drowned World*. 10 years after *Burial*, and with a roster of uncompromising artists such as Fatima Al Qadri, Cooly G, and Laurel Halo on his label, what role does he think urban architecture has on the young sound pioneers of today? "By this point in the game, the idea of the industrial landscape as a muse for electronic music has become somewhat over saturated," he says. "Sure, it was the dereliction of the dying industrial age that inspired many musicians in the late '70s, '80s and '90s so on. But we are now living through the emergence of a whole new strata of technological civilisation and I think musicians and artists can spend their time much more productively by actively engaging with the new spaces and situations that digital capitalism throws up in front of us everyday."



ROLY PORTER

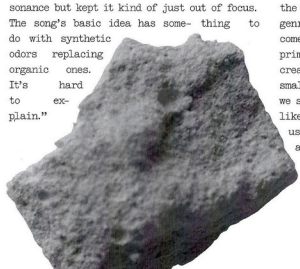


As one half of Vex'd, Roly Porter played a key role in the evolution of dubstep. However, for the past decade, Porter has stepped further and further away from the genre with which he made his name, and focused on instrumental sound design and electronic experimentation. In January, his album *Third Law* was released on Tri-Angle Records, a label who have released music by some of the most pivotal electronic artists of the last six years. For Porter, who recently moved from London to Bristol, pyschogeography will always play a key role in his approach to production. "A city is an unnatural environment and even when you have lived there for years I still feel that in the back of my mind," he says. "Most artistic impulses are driven by a reaction to something and the more comfortable you feel the less driven to react against your environment you will be. Unless you're fighting against something you just slow down and retreat back into comfort."

DEERHUNTER

Based in Atlanta, a city which boasts one of the ugliest brutalist libraries in the world, it comes as little surprise to find that Deerhunter's Bradford Cox has no time for concrete obsessives. "Coldness seems very 'in' these days. Disassociation. Brutalism. Irony," he says. "My vision of hell is a large brutalist government building or hospital. Functional and soulless."

Cox does, however, have a penchant for Ballardian literature, after coming across a Xeroxed copy of *The Atrocity Exhibition* at the age of 19. Last year, he published an interactive map of the influences that inspired Deerhunter's last album, *Fading Frontiers*. On it, Ballard found himself rubbing shoulders with Al Green and Matisse. "I can't listen to our song *Leather and Wood* and not associate it with him and Marvin Gaye," Cox states. "It's a dystopian funk stroller. What made it interesting to me is what is under the surface of it. We tried to emphasise a certain panic with electronic dissonance but kept it kind of just out of focus. The song's basic idea has something to do with synthetic odors replacing organic ones. It's hard to explain."



LANGHAM RESEARCH CENTRE

Langham Research Centre are devoted to creating authentic performances of classic electronic music. In 2014, they performed at Only Connect, an Olso festival dedicated that year to the life and work of JG Ballard. For one of the performances they delved into his 1992

Desert Island Discs selections. Somewhat surprisingly, Ballard was not a fan of much contemporary music, preferring Noel Coward, Rita Hayworth, Astrud Gilberto, and a bit creepily, *The Teddy Bears Picnic* by Henry Hall. "It has never sounded more sinister until being heard in that context, recalls the LRC's Ian Chambers.

His band mate, Robert Worby thinks that the reason why so many progressive new musical genres have come emerged out of high-rises comes back to the human condition. "We are primates, a species of ape. Apes are social creatures that do not like being confined in small, enclosed spaces," he says. "We herd and we swarm occasionally but most of the time we like to have a empty physical space around us: maybe enough to swing our arms and walk about. When the physical space around us is restricted then this effects our psychology which, in turn, has an impact on creative processes."

Each month one person openly - and bravely - defends their secret passion for a disregarded album, song or artist. This month Rough Trade's Simon Russell stands up for (Si, Si) Je Suis un Rock Star by Bill Wyman

IN DEFENCE OF

Rolling Stones' bass player Bill Wyman is not known for his pop nous, but he sneezed, this track came out and and it went on to be a big hit in the UK in 1961. While there are apparently no electronic instruments used in the recording, I really like its synth-pop chops and the combination of the Strolling Bone's flat, atonal vocal in total contrast to the tricksy, intricate rhythms, percussion and melody. That is where my appreciation of this song stops and the dubious nature of the work requires attention.

Bill is a real-life cliché rock star without a care in the world, and in this this song he tells the sleazy tale of a fictional cliché rock star without a care in the world, who seduces a girl that looks young enough to be mistaken as his daughter. To emphasise the blurred line between (his) real-life and rock'n'roll myth, a couple of years after this was a hit, Bill made tabloid headlines after marrying Mandy Smith, a relationship he admitted started when Mandy was 13. Yet Bill didn't save his bragging for his drinking buddies down at the club. No, he told the world about it! In a bloody song! To add a further hint of his blasé attitude at the heart of the story, the apparent general lack of enthusiasm and energy of Bill's vocal delivery is mirrored by the band as they sound like they are playing over a pre-set backing track on a Bontempi keyboard, they could not even be bothered to come up with their own music! (Do you understand, Bill is bored). But of course, this is just a song, a work of fiction so, despite all that is wrong with it, this track remains irresistibly addictive and gets them onto the dance floor to this day.

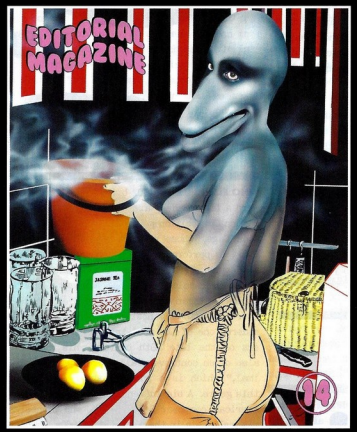
– The real-life cliché rock fan, 2016.

Owner of London's MagCulture shop Jeremy Leslie shares an independent mag you should get your hands on this month

MAGCULTURE RECOMMENDS

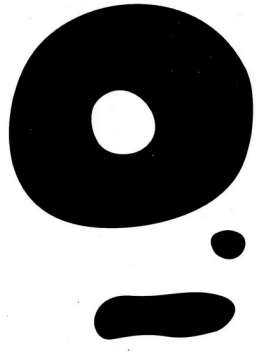
If you like your magazines cosy, safe and comforting, this one's not for you. But if you worry that you live in a Google bubble and are craving some unfamiliar visual input, you need to get hold of *Editorial Magazine* immediately.

The Montreal-based independent covers art and fashion with a refreshing lack of pomposity. Fashion shoots (Benjamin Barron), figurative art (Jamian Juliano Villani) and graphic illustration (Keith Rankin) fall across the pages, a chaos heightened by random graphic references to Victorian books and decorative wallpapers. Do not expect a square centimetre of white space here—if printers charged by ink usage this would be a very expensive magazine to produce.



Tucked amongst the images are several written pieces, of which Brad Phillips' essay about how what was once seen as forgery is transforming into "reference" and "influence" is a highlight. This one piece of writing provides a context for the whole issue, pulling together the entire publication.

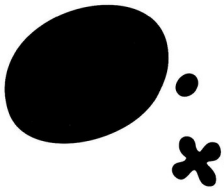
Each month a Rough Trade staff member talks you through a genre, band or musical term that is often bandied around, but perhaps never fully explained. Here's a guide from John Webb from Rough Trade East to everything you need to know about Modern Composition.



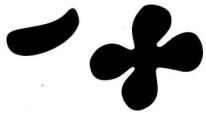
MODERN COMPOSITION – also known as neo-classical/minimalism, post-minimalist composition and contemporary classical. *Disclaimer:* **I'm not an expert on this genre – far from it, in fact. This is just intended as a gentle overview.**

Although the term "modern composition" may sound pretentious, and just another genre that you don't need in your life, you should try it out (unless you're under the age of 30, in which case you should stay away).

The shift from a more "classical" approach to composition started in the early 20th century with Parisian avant-garde and minimalist composer Erik Satie. He died in 1925 from years of absinthe abuse, but before soaking his liver into cirrhosis he blew open the classical genre, basically by making it a little weirder. His most famous compositions are his works *Gymnopédies*. You will know these - even if the name doesn't ring any bells. If you've ever seen a film (excluding *Naked Gun 33 1/3*), or been stuck in a lift, then you'll have heard Satie. In my eyes, Modern Composition as a genre starts with Satie.



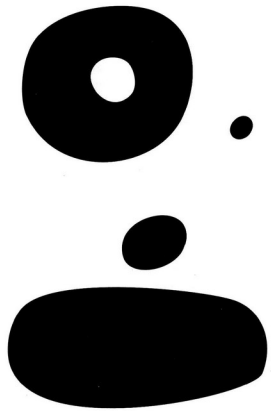
WHO ELSE? O.K., well bringing things forward a few decades, artists that fall into the Modern Composition genre include cats such as John Cage, whose most famous piece entitled *4'33"* is performed in the absence of deliberate sound. Trust me, not a good entry point into his catalogue... Alongside Cage there is fellow American composer, Philip Glass (cousin to *This American Life* host Ira Glass). He is considered one of the most influential music-makers of the late 20th century. His music is also often controversially described as "minimal," which is a running theme throughout this genre. A big influence on Glass was fellow American composer Steve Reich, who pioneered minimal music in the mid to late 1960s. We have to move on here; there are plenty of other big players (Terry Riley for one), but I'm imposing a word count on myself.

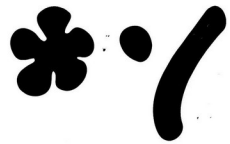


IN CASE YOU WERE AFRAID TO ASK

GAVIN BRYARS: My all time favorite album in our Modern Composition racks is by Gavin Bryars, which was first released on Brian Eno's Obscure Records (Eno also sits in our Modern Composition genre - you know him, he was in Roxy Music). It's entitled *The Sinking Of The Titanic / Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet*. I first heard this record in Covent Garden Rough Trade back in the early 2000's.

This album features two long movements: the first is based on the piece the band on the Titanic were playing as the ship sank; the second piece, *Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet*, features a recording of a homeless old man in London singing the refrain which the title is taken. Both are entirely haunting and deeply compelling. Tom Waits was so moved on hearing *Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet* that he recorded a version of it. That's some high praise right there.





JÓHANN JÓHANNSSON: Another album I heard during the Rough Trade Covent Garden era with which I fell in love is the fourth full length studio album by Icelandic musician Jóhann Jóhannsson, released under 4AD on October 30, 2006, and entitled *IBM 1401, A User's Manual*. Jóhannsson's father worked at IBM as a maintenance engineer for the 1401 Data Processing System, and was also a musician. He figured out a way to program the machine's memory so it emitted electromagnetic waves in a pattern that could be picked up by a radio receiver. The IBM 1401 was taken out of service in 1971, and his father gave it a farewell ceremony that included playing some of the short melodies he had composed. These tracks were recorded. I appreciate that all this sounds awful — but like Bryers, it's strangely but satisfyingly hypnotising.

CURRENT RELEASES: This genre is very much alive and kicking, and 2015 saw some huge releases by German-born British composer Max Richter on Deutsche Grammophon and German musician/composer, Nils Frahm, on the London based Erased Tapes label. There's much more to come in 2016...

FURTHER LISTENING:

Erik Satie *Gymnopedie 1,2,3 Gnossienne 1,2,3,4*
John Cage *Early Electronic and Tape Music*
Philip Glass *Music in 12 Parts*
Steve Reich *Phases - A nonesuch Retrospective*
Terry Riley *Music For The Gift*
Gavin Bryars *Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet*
Johann Johannsson *IBM 1401, A User's Manual*
William Basinski *The Disintegration Loops*
Max Richter *Sleep*
Brian Eno *My Life In The Bush Of Ghosts*
Nils Frahm *Solo*

Each month Seattle vinyl treasure hunters Light in the Attic share secrets of their recent escapades. Words by Matt Sullivan, Image by Yosuke Kitazawa.

Nice to be here, inside Issue No. 1 of Rough Trade Magazine. There'd be no Light In The Attic without RT, so we're truly honoured. Each month, we'll have one of an alternating cast of characters from the LITA family take the reins for this here column. This month, you're subjected to me, Matt Sullivan. I'm the founder/co-owner of LITA, so you can blame me.

I, along with my coworker, Yosuke Kitazawa, recently returned home after a two-week jaunt to Japan, where we ate like kings, drooled in record stores, drank at tiny whiskey record bars, and intensely geeked out on the otherworldly intricacies of Japanese culture. We flew out to Tokyo to work on our Japanese Archival Series, a number of intensely ambitious releases that we'll be presenting on Light In The Attic over the coming years. The trip highlight was, no doubt, the Japanese record store.

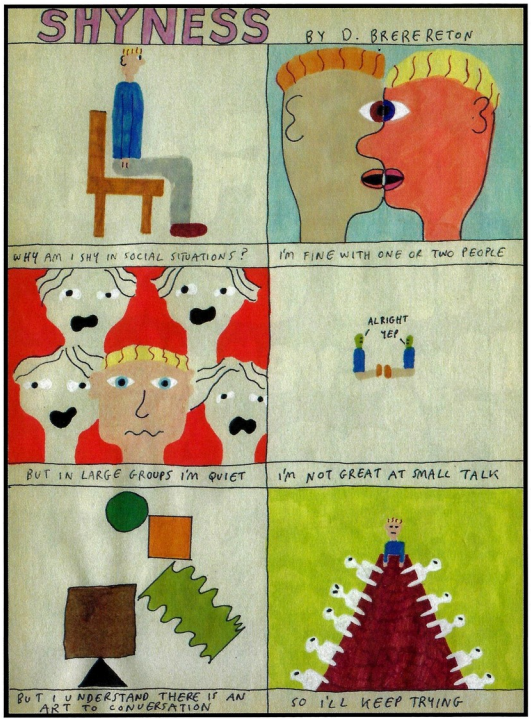
Regardless of genre, era, rarity, or country of origin, it felt like every record I've ever wanted was right there at my fingertips – a magical but also frightful moment for any record nerd.

First world problems, as they say. Upon each shop visit, I felt like a meth addict who'd recently befriended Walt in *Breaking Bad*. Every LP was in exquisite condition, often meticulously presented with an extra cardboard insert to avoid tearing the jacket, all housed in a poly bag, and of course, if you got lucky, you'd get one of those beautiful Japanese OBI cards. Yes, total nerding-out in genuine record bliss. Presentation-wise, the only thing that compares to this wonderful state of OCD-ness is the Japanese two-handed method of presenting one's business card. The Japanese: the world's greatest collectors, most masterful presenters, and extraordinary culinary artists. Bless their souls.

I can't remember if it was RECOfan or Disk Union where Yosuke exclaimed, "Buy this," pointing to some weird LP cover with a girl sporting dark shades and a black curly-haired wig, laying almost death-like in a grass field, an eerie lunar eclipse shining through in the background. For me, without a doubt, Doji Morita's third album, *A Boy* (Polydor, 1977), was the magical find of the trip. The LP has left me totally enthralled and bewildered. Gorgeous, sweeping strings, lush production, and slight bits of folk and psych, all wrapped around Doji's soft, sorrowful, beautiful voice. I've got no idea what she's saying, but I'm feeling every single moment.

The story goes that a friend's death inspired Doji's first LP back in the mid-70s, and all of her albums continue that same somber tone. Adding to the mystery, she remained incredibly private, shying away from showing her face and choosing to hide behind that same giant wig and black sunglasses. Six years following this LP, she vanished from the music world, released one song around 2003, and then completely disappeared once again. Doji, if you're still out there, thank you for the sounds. JBS Bar, thank you for the whiskey. Japan, thank you for the records.

LIGHT IN THE ATTIC


SHYNESS
BY D. BRERETON
WHY AM I SHY IN SOCIAL SITUATIONS?
I'M FINE WITH ONE OR TWO PEOPLE
ALRIGHT
YEP
BUT IN LARGE GROUPS I'M QUIET
I'M NOT GREAT AT SMALL TALK
BUT I UNDERSTAND THERE IS AN ART TO CONVERSATION
SO I'LL KEEP TRYING

Alongside making spectacularly beautiful music videos, Daniel Brereton also draws comics. Usually he just chucks them up on Facebook, so we thought we'd give them a nice new home.

DANIEL BRERETON'S COMIC

My First, My Last, My Everything: Charles Bradley

Each month we invite someone to come into a Rough Trade store and tell us the first record they ever bought, the last they bought, and their favourite of all time. Words by Liv Siddall, Images by Cait Oppermann.

We invited Charles Bradley to Rough Trade New York to have a browse and talk about his favourite records. What we actually ended up talking about was his love for swans, his dream of swimming with dolphins, his fear of giant turkeys and how he smells so great (it's sandalwood cologne).

Charles has this knee-buckling habit of staring into your eyes without blinking, taking your hands in his, and occasionally bursting into song while relaying joyful or painful stories of his extraordinary life. Meeting him felt like meeting a messiah of sorts: he wandered around the shop smiling at small children and giving friendly waves to passers by.

His new and third album, Changes, released on 1st April 2016 on Daptone, sees Charles dig deep into the memories of his past and draw out pieces of heartache, longing and loss. Always delivered with that trademark passion that makes sweat ooze from his head, and goosebumps appear all over the bodies of his audience.

As he embarks on an extensive tour, Daptone's king of soul reminisces about his inimitable life and the experiences - good and harrowing - that have led to him becoming one of the most loved men in music.

RT: What was the first record you owned? CB: The first record I bought of James brown is *Live at the Apollo*. I've got this album at home. I've got the CD in my car right now. This is from when I first went to see him. My sister told me about his guy, I didn't know who he was until I saw him. And when I saw him at The Apollo I said "I want to be something like that." Because of the way he was dancing, the way they had the light effects on him, and the clothes he was wearing. **What kind of clothes?** James Brown wears clothes from his imagination. If he sees something in his spirit that he wants to wear, he'll have it made that way. I saw James Brown and he was like the only person in his time, coming out in his style and doing what he wanted to do. **How old were you?** I was about 14 years old. I could never stop seeing him after that. Coming up in my life, my idols were James Brown and then when it came to the women it was Aretha Franklin, Diana Ross and Barbara Streisand. I love when she did *Memories*. *Memories* became a part of my life and the experiences I had to go through. When I hear that song I get emotional because I think of the memories, I think back to before most of you guys were even alive. The things I was going through in the segregation days, it was crazy. "Memories, light the corner of my mind..." Some people say forget about the past, but the past is your future. You can't just take the hatred and animosity from it, you have to take the good from it and make something for the future. And you have to do your best to not let those things happen to you again. **Do you think about the past more than you do the future?** I think about the past, but I think about the future because the past helped me mould it. You can keep doing the same thing over and over again, but if you didn't learn it from the past to not let it happen again, you're not learning nothing. I learned that if I were to take all the hatred and animosity and use it, I wouldn't be where I am at today. Some of the hatred and animosity I took and moulded it inside of me and turned it to good and pushed it back out. It's hard. My grandmother always said there's not going to be a storm every day. You're going through the storm, but eventually that storm gonna end and then the sun gonna shine. I've just turned 67 years old. I was born November 5th 1948.

In Gainesville Florida and I have seen a lot of change in this world. A lot of change. One of my sound guys, he said to me "Charles, you got nine lives." He told me that the other day. Nine lives. I said "I've seen things you've experienced too," and he says he still wonders how I did it. I could tell you stories from back in my days. My aunt, her name was Andella and she used to tell me about slavery, but I was about five or six years old when she used to tell me and I used to laugh at her because I didn't understand. As I got older and grew and as I seen things, like back in Kennedy's time and Martin Luther King. I remember when I couldn't go past a line on a road, the whites could go anywhere they want to go. I learned a lot of things. President Kennedy was the best president I had ever known and he will always be the best even though we got Obama. President Kennedy, that man was a man of character. **What did you like about President Kennedy?** What made me really truly love him – and I cried like a baby when they killed him – was when he got on the phone and he called down south and he said "I want you to let Martin Luther King out of the jail, if you don't let him out of the jail I will come down and get him myself." He also took those nuclear weapons out of Cuba and at that time the world was in shock, they were scared, everyone thought the end of the world was coming any day. **So you lived in fear?** Yes. Right now it's very quiet. But as quiet as it may seem right now, something is happening. The leaders are not going to tell you what they doing. Because I noticed that some place overseas now they have been testing nuclear weapons. They are testing them underground in the earth. What they're doing is breaking down the earth. I was in California in 1989 when we had the earthquake, it was 7.3 and that was nothing to play with. I saw the whole ground open up and close back up. Another one of my nine lives.

Then Charles begins looking at some Al Green albums. He picks up Al Green Gets Next to You.

For me, you should trim that suit down to about there. And you see the buttons? They should be black. Little black buttons right there. I would take all this stuff off, and I would use black trim and black buttons. I'd have blue pants with a black streak going down. **So what was the last record you listened to?** CB: I've always loved Sam Cooke. Al Green, I eventually started liking him. I like him here. Bobby Womack. Cat Stevens. I love Cat Stevens, I loved him when he first started singing. He's changed his name now. And one song by The Eagles I love called *Take it to the Limit*. That song actually saved my life. I was going through a depression moment and as I came out I was in an Italian restaurant and I was sitting there just thinking about how to get these pains out of my system. Somebody came in and put a quarter in the jukebox to play *Take it to The Limit*. Then I woke up.

Charles picks up a Sam Cooke record

Ah, a beautiful song. "When I fall in love... it will be forever." **Do you know hang out with lots of musicians?** You know what, I'm mostly a loner. On the road I meet musicians and singers. You know I met James Brown, I was very good friends with him. I met Bobby Womack, very close friends with him. Aretha, I never got close to but say hello. Diana Ross. Who else I met. Quite a lot of people. Some just stick to my brain and I really want to see them again. **You smell so nice. What is that?** It's a wood cologne. I love nature. **I hear you're a painter?** They started me painting again because I hadn't painted in a while. Seascapes are my favourite, I can sit by the ocean for hours. I love it. I like it when it's very thundery and gloomy. I can sit there and watch and listen to it for hours. I like to use oils, you can blend colours easier. You always paint the lightest things in the back, then you bring the darkness towards you, and then you blend it in. That's the way I learned to paint. If you give me something to paint I'll just start staring at it then all of a sudden my brain will say "OK Charles, there you go" then I begin. I start pulling the picture into my brain and work out what is the best way to start capturing that in a painting. **What do you do in your spare time apart from painting?** Since my mom left me this house I gotta to maintain and take care of it. It's a three unit and I have tenants in there. When I'm home there's always something to do, if not then I'm at the studio. At the moment I've got to try

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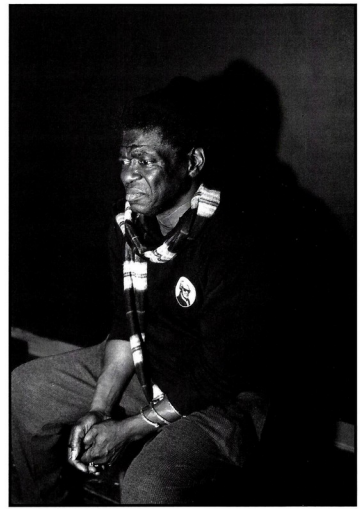
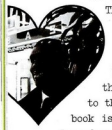


and remember all these new lyrics, maintain them in my brain and keep them up there. Always something. But sometimes I get in a lazy mood and all I wanna do is lay on the couch and watch movies. **What kind of movies do you watch?** I love nature and I love movies about nature. I just learned something the other day that I gotta tell you about, one of the animals that I love so much is the dolphin - but my favourite animal is the swan, I love when they open their wings, and it's so beautiful. Anyway one of my fantasies is that I have always wanted to get into the water with a dolphin and play with them. That's one of my fantasies. They're so loveable. Yesterday a guy was showing me a video on his phone, this lady was sitting by a big huge saltwater pool and the lady had swimming trunks on, so she played with this dolphin and she was just rubbing his chin when he jumped right out of the water and jumped on her and started doing his thing! I said no! I don't believe what I am seeing! **So that hasn't put you off the idea?** No. They told me I couldn't play with swans but when I was in Europe we were by this big pond, there were about eight or nine swans that were out in the water. So I went into a store and bought me about four loaves of bread and I threw them in the water. They came towards me as I was sitting in the grass. In a group of swans, one of them is always controlling the rest. I gave one of the swans a piece of bread, the head swan came up and snatched it and ran back. But when any of the other swans came towards me he didn't like it. He tell them "no," he wanted to be the one to come towards me. Once he saw that I really wasn't trying to hurt him, all of them came in. People started coming up to me and standing around and taking pictures because I was playing with these swans. They say you can't touch them and they have a violent reputation but you just gotta get to know them. They have a fierce spirit. Now I tell you what not to trust, a turkey. A wild turkey. Never trust a wild turkey. They will beat you to death. Once they know you scared of them? They will chase you everywhere. And once they jump on you they will keep hitting you. **So tell me about your new album, have you enjoyed making it?** When I sung it it was beautiful, but now I gotta get it locked into my brain so that I can put all my emphasis into the spirit of my performance. It's fine to be writing lyrics all day but now I gotta remember them so I can give it out. On one of my new songs, *Changes*, the part that really bothers me the most is the last lyric, because of its depth. They remind me of the time my mom took her last breath. "It took so long to realise, I can still hear her last goodbyes. And now all my days have turned into tears, I wish I can go back and change these years." Now that is what touches me. Because when I went into her bedroom, her eyes were just twinkling, and then they went still. So that verse just makes me remember. **Wow. Are you okay to sing it live?** I'm learning how to silence that deep hurt, push it aside and let it out. I stutter sometimes. "I feel unhappy, I feel so sad, I have lost the best friend that I ever had. She was my woman, I love her so, but it's too late now. I let her go. I'm going through changes." I can't put emotion into that until I am on stage. I'm an open person. If we get deep now there are going to be some moments where you might wanna cry so don't ask me too much.

Tidbits and tip-offs straight from the brains of Rough Trade staff worldwide

Sophie Diver
Rough Trade Nottingham

Look out for *Here She Comes Now*; it's a wonderful collection of writers celebrating women in music who've truly left their mark.



There's an open letter to RF Harvey, sex education courtesy of Liz Phair and recurring dreams of a road trip with Kim Gordon. These aren't short biographies; instead it's praise for the women that provided a soundtrack to those inevitable growing pains. This book is sure to trigger rediscoveries of long-forgotten mixtapes.

Amy Hurst
Rough Trade East

Voice of the Eagle by Robbie Basho: Both his hands pick out strands and yarns of eastern or open scales, delving into his own ad-libbed Indian Raga techniques until it sounds like at least four hands are playing, expanding layers of classical and yet mystical 12 string guitar realms.

Playing until they are woven into complex and affecting tapestries of praise and worships of spiritualism - toward which he dedicated so much of his life. Later this focus shifted to his love of the deeply sublime, open landscapes of Western America and their Native American inhabitants.

The documentary *Voice of the Eagle: The Enigma of Robbie Basho* will fill gaps about the sensitive introvert and his recordings, his absolute dedication to Sufism and commitment to self-expression through music.

With a voice so wondrous - when used on *Visions of the Country* being my favourite example - Basho could have both the power and emotional dexterity of a minimalist opera singer — one that could surely conjure the joy and sadness of the spirits both past and future. This film is worth hunting out, the records even more so.

George Flanagan
Rough Trade NYC

Hope Sandoval & The Warm Inventions- *Isn't It True* 7" (Record Store Day release): I'm highly anticipating these two new songs from one of the most intoxicating voices on earth. As much as I was happy to see Mazzy Star reunite for 2013's *Seasons Of Your Day*, I think some of the best music she's made has been as a solo artist. Let's hope these two songs are a promising appetizer for what will be a delicious album.

John Webb
Rough Trade East

For those that are curious about what makes us who we are / how our minds work / how you can enhance your learning capacity by strapping 9-Volt batteries to your head (Episode *9-Volt Nirvana*), then check out the vault of mind-bending information that is the Radiolab Podcasts - http://www.radiolab.org

Andrea Larsen
Rough Trade NYC

Der Fan is the repulsive story of the depths high school student Simone will go to in the name of fanaticism and obsession. A celebrity crush on pop singer, R, played by Bodo Steigler from Rheingold, takes the viewer on a disturbing slippery slope journey ending with a gigantic punctuation mark. An amazing soundtrack by Rheingold compliments the 80's West German horror film. Recently restored and rereleased by Mondo Macabre. Not for everyone.

Simon Rough

I won't be alone in these recommendations, but if you want to listen to an incredibly diverse selection of independently-produced, high quality radio documentaries, you can do no worse than seek out *This American Life* (thisamericanlife.org) and it's punky cousin *PRX Remix* (prx.mx). If you want a similar high standard of listening pleasure but your bent is the sonic arts, then *UbuWeb* is the place for you (ubuweb.com).

Russell
Trade everywhere

Ed Hynds
Rough Trade NYC

Why I love Inga Copeland: I want Inga Copeland to lie to me. All the time. I don't want to know when her next record is coming out. Or if it will be a record at all. Perhaps it'll be a plastic bag with a receipt for a takeaway stapled to the side. Or a picture of someone coughing inside a Ford Capri parked on the roof of an airport. Perhaps Inga Copeland doesn't exist at all. I don't mind. I love her just the same. Perhaps even more so. I'm heartily sick of demanding the "truth."

Nina Hervé
Rough Trade East

I had a dream last night that Patti Smith came to the shop unannounced. When she arrived all of the staff stopped what they were doing, all the customers put down the records they were about to purchase and as she walked towards the counter they put their hands together and gave her a round of applause. She greeted me with a big friendly hug and told me it was good to see me again and asked me what detective shows id been watching lately. I told her I'd recently started reading George Simenon's *Maigret* books after watching the old TV series featuring Michael Gambon as Maigret. She told me she had written a series of crime fiction where the lead character was an American female detective who was living in Paris. She then revealed that she had sold the rights to HBO and a tv series was coming out in 2018. She would be starring as the lead character. I then woke up and was very disappointed that none of this was real.

Stewart Young
Rough Trade NYC

Witchcraft - *Nucleus*: Sweden's Witchcraft's fifth album has taken my heart by storm. While I'm not a full scale metalhead, I do find that I will like a well-rounded and well-done metal album more than just about anything, especially one that touches on so many areas of interest. There are the obvious nods to Sabbath, but also generous hints of Purple at their bluesiest, Focus, Tull, and Bathory. All told, the diversity and solid songwriting is just what the shaman ordered. Raise the Mead Horn high!

Dennis Manzanedo
Rough Trade NYC

Elvis Presley — *That's All Right/Blue Moon Of Kentucky* 1954: From the control booth at Sun Studios Sam Phillips tells guitarist Scotty Moore to simplify. He says don't overplay and keep it raw and natural. Elvis at the age of 19 records his first commercial single with double sided hits, breaking racial barriers and starting a revolution. Indie rock at it best!

Kyle Hougham
Rough Trade
Nottingham

Inventory Magazine Issue 13 has become my essential seasonal publication and whilst the content is quite broad, it does a great job to sum up contemporary menswear and the scenes that influence it, from streetwear and beyond. Issue 13 makes a statement with legendary designer Agnès B. on the cover - plus the Rough Trade "On Tour" tote bag in the shot will be a favourite of ours for years to come.

STAFF PICKS

Our very own writer-in-residence Dan Richards reminisces about customers' reactions to Patti Smith's sudden appearance in Rough Trade East. Words by Dan Richards, Illustration by Yann Le Bec.

WHEN PATTI SMITH CAME TO ROUGH TRADE EAST

We settle down together but at different ends of the room, me with my notebook, perched on a speaker, she sat behind a wooden table as events manager Ben buzzes to replenish *M Train*, their rust coloured covers piled around Patti like a fort. A natty man from Macmillan and two ladies from press form an efficient chain — lifting books from boxes, opening them to their title page to be taken up, signed, taken back, re-boxed. This system runs for some time in hushed concentration — the sound of a tongue at the corner of a mouth. When all the hardbacks are done, more books, bronze paperbacks this time...

Patti Smith is less angular than I'd expected. She seems gentle, at ease. There's something monastic in her bearing, earthy and graceful. I imagine she's herself everywhere — equally at home here as anywhere else.

Patti Smith is less angular than I'd expected. She seems gentle, at ease. There's something monastic in her bearing, earthy and graceful.

Early on I spot customers grinning in recognition. The double takers rapidly break into two groups, those able to carry on about their business and those not.

The stratum levels of "people being cool" — The staff just getting on with it around the place because they've work to do and, you know, this is just the sort of thing to happen here... Those punters visibly confused, audibly sighing; browsing but hardly glancing at the CDs beneath their giddy hands; distractedly edging about the **SALE** and **BRITISH EUROPEAN** sections... People peering around pillars, over booth backs, nervy; unable to remember how to behave.

There's a duffle coated lurker, all unease, flicking through vinyl for something to do. A suited man at the listening post, not listening. People biding their time along the route they've worked out she "must surely take" out the store.

To stand back and watch these people you'd be forgiven for thinking they were involved in an elaborate hit rather than planning to ask for an autograph or proffer a clammy hand...

Then, breaking through the invisible force-field of piss-factor reputation apparently issuing from this most un-intimidating lady still busy signing, a couple approach grinning unselfconsciously, childlike in their joy. They've no intention of playing it cool. Sangfroid be buggered, it's Patti Smith! And they're embraced, grinned at back, because she is! Their honest enthusiasm saves them because it is weird and exciting, isn't it!?

So Adam — "Adam", Patti repeats his name deliberately whilst writing — gets his *M Train* signed. They talk a minute to talk, Patti ruefully scratches her head, a moment's pause in the signing whirl, then she's off again: signing records, box sets, whatever's put in front of her, placed beneath her hands, grinning as she goes, and suddenly the mood lifts — no, nothing so sombre or portentous — suddenly this is natural and people relax. Nobody will be crucified just for saying "Hello." But it's all too much for the boy in the duffle coat who's been studiously but wholly unconvincingly thumbing through the LPs nearby. Losing his nerve at the last he bolts over to the relative safety of **NEW RELEASES** lips trembling, visibly livid with himself.

Things are drawing to a close. 500 signed in 45 minutes. "Carrie Brownstein blazed the same in about half an hour!" someone tells me later and I think of her riffing her way through the title pages of *Hunger Makes Me a Modern Girl*, hands moving in a blur.

The last few tens of books are shuffled along the table to Patti who's now standing up to better see her fort off. The amount of staff helping has suddenly doubled.

Ben gets *Horses* signed for his girlfriend. She's a singer too, he tells Patti, and she's asked him to ask if there's any kind of knack to prolonged aggressive singing.

"Sing through your nose," says Patti. "Does she smoke?" Ben nods. "She should stop smoking," says Patti, emphatically. "Tell her."

Then it's done. People get ready to go, put on coats, shake hands, disperse.

"Bye, everybody," calls Patti to the shop at large, leading her cohort minders out.

Nina beams. Patti, it turns out, has agreed to write something for Rough Trade's anniversary journal. "She was telling me, she stopped over for a night in London last year when a plane was cancelled and spent the time watching detective dramas on ITV3... she loves detective shows. I asked her to write a detective story about the shop. She said she'll do whatever we want!"

I'm left with the image of Patti Smith in a Paddington hotel transfixed by *Wycliffe* and *The Sweeney* as the shop settles back in her wake and the rhythm of a Monday morning reasserts itself.

THE MAGNETIC NORTH

Rough Trade's Ben Monaghan takes a trip to his hometown of Skelmersdale with Simon Tong, whose latest album with The Magnetic North is inspired by the very same place.

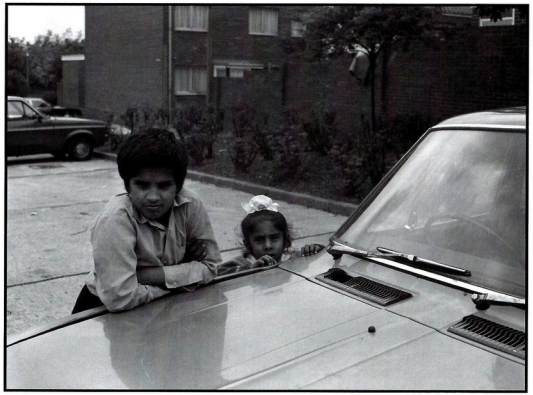
Amidst a non-stop day of work at Rough Trade East, a chance meeting with Full Time Hobby's Nigel Adams stopped me in my tracks. "We've got a new album ready for release," he says. "You probably haven't heard of it, but it's a concept album based on a town called Skelmersdale."... "Skem?" I said, "Is this a wind-up? That's where I'm from!"

A likely moment of chance may be your first thought. But as someone who grew up in this much maligned, misunderstood and often forgotten "new town" known as Skem (or "Skum" to certain cynics), the story of this project really resonated. It brought about an instant attachment of hometown emotion: an unexpected feeling of hope for a flawed town of unique complexity. The opportunity to find out more about this album, and the aims of those behind it, offered up the rare prospect of re-connecting with home through music. Retracing a narrative I had perhaps chosen to forget myself, when I left in 2002.

"Skem?" I said, "Is this a wind-up? That's where I'm from!"

Sandwiched somewhere between Wigan and Southport, the no-man's-land backdrop became the site for a bold social housing master-plan, when it was designated a "new town" in 1961. Tackling post-war population redistribution, houses and roads were swiftly built, and the burgeoning population of nearby Liverpool migrated to the countryside. The modernist approach to transport and architecture gave the self-contained town a distinct identity. Brutalist housing estates met formulaic webs of streets, alley ways and underpasses, all connected by a proudly safe road system. There are no traffic lights in Skem, and the town lays claim to "the largest roundabout in Europe." Exciting stuff.

The strategically developed community offered the hope of a new life to many. But less than 20 years later, the town was failing. Succumbing to the effects of Thatcher's Britain. Development plans slowed down, unemployment, crime and drug abuse were rife, and the master-plan had wilted.



In 1984 I was born and brought home to Ledburn. Unbeknown to me, 11-year-old Simon Tong had moved in to the very same street. Fast forward 22 years and we're holed up in Rough Trade East, discussing his new album with The Magnetic North; *The Prospect of Skelmersdale*. It's the second release from the multi-talented trio of Simon Tong (once of The Verve, Gorillaz, Good, the Bad and the Queen), Erland Cooper (of Erland and the Carnival), and revered multi-instrumentalist and solo-artist Hannah Peel.

BM: Tell me about your early relationship with the town. ST: I moved there in 1984. From Bolton. It was to do with the TM (Transcendental Meditation) movement. My Dad was a practitioner, a follower of the Maharishi. A lot of TM people were moving there to create this sort of ideal village. Skem, as you know, at that time had cheap houses because a lot of people didn't want to live there. Thatcher's annihilation of that part of the world had hit. It was a kind of experiment for the TM. They'd all meditate twice a day in a factory in Pimbo, the idea being that their vibes would spread out and reduce crime, reduce poverty to make the place a more positive area. Whether they did or not I don't know. But it felt like a nice place to live overall. **Was a big part of writing the album recalling those early memories? Retracing your own past?** To a certain extent. Which is why at first I didn't want to do it really. With our first album being set in the Orkney Islands, where Erland had lived, he'd wrote about his childhood there. But myself and Hannah had also wrote about the Islands. And it was a similar thing with Skem. Me writing from my own memory and from my own feelings about the place, and then their view of it. I sent them up there quite early on, when we were talking about an album about Skem, which always seemed so surreal. **Did you not go back with them?** Not at first. It was about their independent look at it, unfettered by my view. They stayed there, took photographs, met people, visited the library, which is kind of the cultural hub of the town. They met Carol Fenlon, who has a local writers' group. She took them back to her house and gave them tea, books that she'd self published, journals, collections of local writers, poems. She gave them this great DVD that had a couple of old promotional documentaries from the '70s. One was called *Prospect of Skelmersdale*, and was kind of the spark for what the album was gonna be about. In the film, the town was still new and it was trying to get industry to move there, saying what a wonderful place it was gonna be. They'd picked the cream of Liverpool to move there, the real go-getting people who were gonna make the town a success. And obviously that completely failed, and the industry went away in the '70s when the grants ran out. So you had this town that was left, kind of as a failed experiment. **How does the sound of the record reflect these themes?** Initially, when I mentioned it to a few people, they expected it to sound industrial and grimy, but it ended up sounding almost pastoral. We use a lot of clarinets and flutes mixed with old '70s synthesisers, so it was almost finding the beauty in a place, where you wouldn't necessarily think there was beauty. **Can you tell me about the archive photos used for the singles and album artwork?** Looking for old images in the archives in Preston, nothing resonated. Then we found this photographer from Liverpool, who had been in Skem in 1984, which was the year I moved there coincidentally, and he'd taken loads of photos of the housing estates and the people, roads, roundabouts. Although a lot of the shots - particularly of the housing estates - are a bit grim, the shots of the people are quite hopeful. The one on the front cover with the girl holding the chicken... it kind of reminded me of the film *Kes*. There's something kind of hopeful about it. She's in this council estate, but she's rearing chickens. It looks like she's trying, you know what I mean? Like there's some kind of future in Skem.

...finding the beauty in a place, where you wouldn't necessarily think there was beauty.

– All images © Stephen McCoy

ROUGH TRADE'S BOOK OF THE MONTH: THE BRICKS THAT BUILT THE HOUSES BY KATE TEMPEST

Words by Liz Stoddart & Mica Levi

Any fans of Kate Tempest will go wild for her new novel: set in London it follows three young city dwellers hell-bent on fleeing the city they've grown up in, escaping the confines of the place and people who have held them captive for too long. For anyone who knows Kate's inimitable ability to convey beautiful characters living in an urban environment, they'll notice how this novel is written in an astonishingly "Kate" tone of voice. Wait, has Kate ever done anything that isn't in her trademark flowing style? Perhaps not. Often somewhat lazily labelled as "the voice of her generation," Kate's success in the last decade has been primarily down to her ability to communicate effortlessly what most other artists can do cackhandedly. Her candid, tender words come from a place of experience and respect for her surroundings: drawing on her knowledge of the world from first-hand experience and profoundly delicate and pure observations. The props within *The Bricks that Built the Houses* (cigarettes, backpacks, buses, text messages, toast) are like fairy lights flashing around the characters, guiding you through with a familiar and trustworthy hand.

Rather than just review this book (if you like Kate, you'll read it regardless of what we say about it) we wanted to ask someone who really knew Kate to offer up some advice on what to expect. Fellow recording artist and increasingly prolific producer and composer Mica Levi has been pals with Kate for years. Having studied, lived, worked, taught and won awards in London, Mica shares Kate's love for the city, and the osmosis-like way in which it can intrinsically affect someone's creative output. In fact, Kate's book is dedicated to just that via an eerily, heart-stopping few lines before the story begins: "For my family, blood and otherwise. And for south-east London: my oldest friend, my only hope, my darkest gut rot night."

What would your best friends say about you if they were to tell someone? Whatever it is, it perhaps wouldn't be as succinct and powerful as what Mica has to say about Kate. Here she is on what makes Kate such a brilliant writer, storyteller and friend. Mica says that before we read *The Bricks that Built the Houses* we should also check out Kate's book *Brand New Ancients* and album *Everybody Down* as they are "a three-part story." Without further ado, here she is...

"I love Kate because she shares all her wisdom-exchanging all her faults along with it. Exposing us all.

Her words make me think but stop me worrying; they steer me back towards the greater causes just in case I forgot or gave up on them.

I think Kate has the same love for the epic dramas of life as she does a fried egg. They all matter the same to her.

I find her words to be intensely romantic and passionate about the human condition, and how love towards another feels.

She's there in all her characters a bit, or if not in them then directly fighting them. In my head when I read her stuff, her voice is there – half chat, half singing preacher-woman with gold hair.

Kate is full of metaphors and fables, she is hard to give advice to because she's so wise. Perhaps because she is a good listener and is interested in everybody. Regardless, she goes through the tumbles unprotected like the rest of us. Those tumbles are in the books and poems.

She's like a Greek god walking the streets. Prometheus the prophet, or Shakespeare, or Joan of Arc, or someone similar."

Image by Dan Kennett

A cult books column by Londoners author and in-demand writer Craig Taylor. Illustration by Jack Sachs.

I used to own this thick, unwieldy hardback called the *1001 Books You Must Read Before You Die*. Each time I moved house I'd consider jettisoning the thing, but it somehow made the cut. During one move I ripped the cover and caught a glimpse of the word "DIE" on the spine.

DIE! DIE! The book was making me think too much about my own death and all that would remain unachieved. By my deathbed, someone would inevitably standing next to me holding that fat book as I flatlined. They'd say: "The sad thing? He only got to 564."

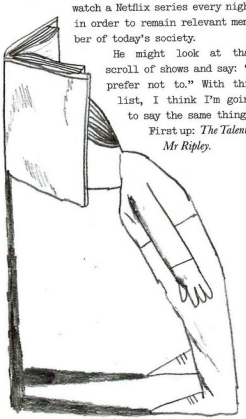
Around the time I gave up and passed the "DIE" volume to another aspirational reader, I came across another list-book (I'm a sucker for them) called *500 Essential Cult Books*. Not books on cults, says the editor, Gina McKinnon, but rather books that have transcended "being merely liked, or even loved, and inspire a fierce unspoken devotion." In her introduction, she also provides another definition by Barry Gifford, author of *Wild at Heart*, the source of the David Lynch film. To him cult "just means it is a title of particular interest that has not sold as many copies as *Gone With the Wind*." Noted.

This was good news. Already my number was halved to 500. And there were some weird books inside, including *What It Takes To Be #1: Vince Lombardi on Leadership*. Mostly I'd flick the pages and just think: why not? *The Scum Manifesto* by Valerie Solanas? *Hit Man: A Technical Manual for Independent Contractors*? Why not? Anything that would take me far from omnipresent book of any given time, the siren call of the mediocre gone girls.

I flipped to page 295: *Dianetics* by L. Ron. Fucking hell. But why not? Isn't it better to sneer at the Personality Test after reading the book? There are many missing and questionable additions, but the list was a reminder of that voice that used to emanate from older siblings or the guy who worked at the bookshop of your youth – the one that was turned, I'm sure, into a Costa Coffee in 2004. "If you read these books, you'll become a certain kind of person."

The books lead to the music, the music leads to the books. "Wow, David Bowie was quite the reader," a friend remarked after Bowie's list of essential reading surfaced online after his death. Of course he was. He understood, as do other non-dumb musicians, that the inspiration and sensibility flows back and forth. I remember a record shop (it was turned into a Costa Coffee in 2007) where it was expected you'd put a used book – *Wide Sargasso Sea*, *The Wasp Factory* – atop any musical purchase.

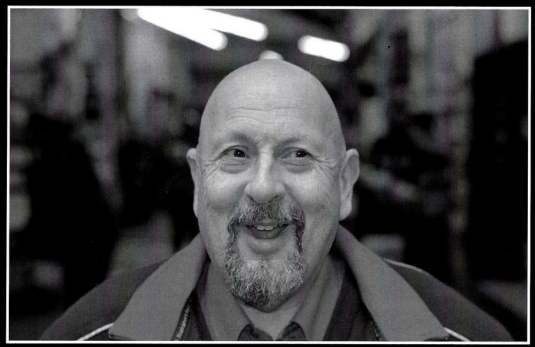
Flicking through the 500 cult books energized me. If Melville's *Bartleby* was around now he'd probably be told it was a good idea to watch a Netflix series every night in order to remain relevant member of today's society.



He might look at that scroll of shows and say: "I prefer not to." With this list, I think I'm going to say the same thing.

First up: *The Talented Mr Ripley*.

CULT BOOKS



A Rough Trade employee interviews a bloody good pal about the music they enjoy. Words & Image by Mat Hart.

Hi Simon. First off can you tell us a bit about yourself in no more than 140 characters. Hmmm... being an old hippie...a rebel in his day...a big music fan and former record store owner who still collects vinyl. **A former record store owner?** You bet! I had a small store in Crouch End called Terrapin Trucking. Nick Hornby used to come by from time to time... old customers tell me that there were a lot of similarities between my store and the one from *High Fidelity* but that was the early '90s... **So what do you do for kicks these days?** Well, I work part time on the platforms for TFL. It keeps me busy in the mornings. I also run a small music merchandise company called Rockpots which specialises in great bands from yesteryear who are still kickin' around somewhere on the planet! **What kinda bands/era are we talking about?** Oh you know... the glorious but disappearing '60s and '70s. I'm currently working on a range of T-Shirts and ceramic mug designs for Gentle Giant and early Genesis – not be confused with run-of-the-mill shit Genesis from the '80s! **So are there any modern artists you're into?** Well... I don't really listen to much new stuff these days, but there's one man who released an album in June of last year, Richard Thompson. The album is called *Still*. **That's quite an unusual choice, what made you go for him?** For me, he is England's premier singer-songwriter guitarist! **Good plug! You two aren't friends are you?** No... although I did play in the same cricket team as him once, down at Cropredy Festival in Oxfordshire. **Right. So, what brings you here today?** Just a little light browsing. I'm off to the movies later tonight with my wife...we got married on New Year's Eve. **Wow! Whilst on the topic of love, we'd like to paraphrase from everyone's favourite big, bad, ballad buster: Meatloaf's "I would do anything for love, but I won't do that." What wouldn't you do for love Simon?** Easy. I wouldn't go shopping in IKEA! **What's your beef with IKEA?!** I find it one of the most terrifying and horrific places on Earth! I used to be persuaded sometimes because I knew their meatballs were pretty good... but then it came out that they were horsemeat meatballs and that was the final straw!

ALL MY FRIENDS

p53 – Øystein, Jørn and Pelle in Øystein's parents' house in Ski, 1989. Øystein wearing a Venom (UK) shirt, Jørn wearing a Celtic Frost (Switzerland) shirt, Pelle wearing a Sarcofago (Brazil) shirt. This was around the time Øystein adopted Pelle's corpsepaint concept. Photo courtesy of Mayhem.

p54 – Øystein and Jørn at the Langhus train station direction south, spring 1987, from the photosessionsforthe "Deathcrush" EP. Mayhem graffiti by the band, "Nightshift Disturbance" graffiti by unknown. Photo: Øyvind Ihle.

p56 – Øystein on the couch at Jørn's room in his parents' house in Langhus, Ca. Summer 1987, Playing Maniac's guitar with Corrosion of Conformity (US) and Cryptic Slaughter (US) stickers. On the wall behind him a hand-drawn Venom "Black Metal" poster, a Venom "Possessed" era band photo, the "Frank the cow" newspaper cutout that was later used on the "Deathcrush" vinyl label, and the first Mayhem backdrop made by Jørn and Øystein. Photo by Gary Peyton.

p57 – Jørn in the rehearsal space in early 1988 toward the band's photo-shoot with Pelle. Wearing a Death (US) shirt and stage blood provided by Pelle. Photo by Øyvind Ihlen.

p60 – Jørn, aka "Necrobutcher" with a shotgun.

Ecstatic Peace Library

Ecstatic Peace Library is Thurston Moore and Eva Prinz's ever-evolving publishing venture. Their latest book is The Death Archives: Mayhem 1984-94, the illustrated biography of Norwegian Black Metal pioneer Necrobutcher. We met up with them to chat about their unquenchable thirst for publishing, and the story behind this new tome.

Thurston Moore and Eva Prinz love books. Thurston's been hungrily publishing his brain spewings into zines since the early '80s while elsewhere Eva spent a couple of years as editor at Rizzoli and later on, Abrams. You should see them talk about books: Eva goes gooey, stroking the spines and holding the hardbacks close to her. She told a story about how she once temporarily swapped her passport for some rare issues of an underground zine. When it comes to Thurston, he just opens up his head-catalogue and begins sharing with you his bottomless pit of knowledge of what seems like every underground publishing venture of the 21st Century. Together they are Ecstatic Peace Library: putting exquisitely designed and bound publications out into the world that explore previously unseen projects by extraordinary people through history.

To go back a little, in 2010 Thurston came across James Hamilton, a photographer who had documented the New York music scene for *Crawdaddy!*, *The Village Voice*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *The New York Observer* among others. He and Eva published his immeasurably honest, captivating black and white portraits in a much-loved book entitled *You Should Have Heard Just What I Seen*.

In 2011 they published *This Train is Bound For Glory*, a cloth-bound book showcasing photographer Justine Kurland's documentation of a trip around America's railways with her young son. Good luck getting a copy, they are incredibly hard to find, and when you do come across one it will set you back around £1000.

"I had the name 'Ecstatic Peace' since around '81. I used it for putting out cassettes and records and whatever, I used it as my brand name - although I wasn't using the language 'brand' so much – I was just Ecstatic Peace," says Thurston. "I got the name from reading a Tom Wolfe book *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*. It was talking about how hippy culture was striving for 'ecstatic peace,' and it was italicised with an exclamation point, so I xeroxed those words. I just looked at it on the page and said 'That's the name of my label.'"

Thurston started putting out spoken word and mix cassettes under this pseudonym, until Eva came along and proposed working on a series of

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books under the same name. "We had previously worked on a mixtape book together, and at that time Eva was the senior editor at Rizzoli. We did a couple of other projects and then she moved over to Abrams and we started working together," Thurston says. "I remember Eva saying to me, 'let's do Ecstatic Peace Library!' Because I told her I wanted to make more books. I think she really liked the initials of it because it really worked with Eva Prinz," he grins.

With Eva's publishing expertise and her somewhat genius logo creation (a peace sign incorporating an E and a P), she and Thurston embarked on the new project together. "It was very holistic. We wanted to control the paper that we chose, we wanted to be on press, we wanted to do it locally," Eva says. "When you go via a publisher it's your baby but at a certain point your book is in the hands of somebody else. Even though all of the love is there that you have put in..they can take it and change it. I just feel like we could do it more responsibly and on recycled paper and so on. Not that we're hippies. Well, actually we are total hippies."

"Part-time hippies," adds Thurston.

The thing is, Thurston made some excellent zines in the '80s. Now over 30 years later he's putting he and Eva's unquenchable urge to publish to even better use, and providing fellow book nerds with paper and cloth objects that open doors to previously undisturbed subcultures. They're explorers, blowing dust off dark corners of pop history and revealing them to the public as shining, beautiful objects. Pretty great for two hippies.

Their latest project, *Death Archives: Mayhem 1984-94*, is Norwegian Black Metal pioneer Necrobutcher's illustrated biography. Featuring photos taken during the time of the band – including the controversial one of bandmate Dead moments after he had committed suicide – and writing by Jørn "Necrobutcher" Stubberud with Svein Stremmen, the book has an afterword by Thurston himself.

We caught up with Eva and Thurston to talk to them about this new, kinda controversial publication.

Thurston: It's of the first things we're doing here after our relocation to London. As far as doing some quote/unquote serious publishing, the first thing we are doing is an English transition and publication of this book by the guitar player from the premier Norwegian Black Metal pioneer band Mayhem. His name is Jørn Stubberud and in Mayhem his name is Necrobutcher.

EP: He doesn't wake up until 6 at night so all of our meetings are at like midnight. **TM:** I had a fascination with Norwegian Black Metal for years, and just as a musician I was so curious because it sounded so unlike any other music, ever. Even metal. And the subculture of it was completely kind of bonkers. It existed so far below any ambition towards mainstream that I was really very, very fascinated by that factor. So when I was recently doing an interview with a Norwegian journalist and he said that he had heard I was an enthusiast, I said I don't really follow it so much these days, but that I had spent an inordinate amount of time years ago archiving all of the Norwegian Black Metal cassette music and stuff. He said "Well, Necrobutcher has just written a memoir of the first years of Mayhem." The book is called Dead's archive. Dead was the singer, Dead killed himself a few years into the band's existence. **RT:** What did they do after he died? **TM:** Many things transpired, they got different singers, but they were the centre of the black metal scene that was around this record store in Oslo called Hell. The proprietor was the bass player of the band, his name was Euronymous. He was murdered by Burzum who put out one of the strangest and wildest records of the black metal scene that really changed the aesthetic of the sound. This guy Burzum went to jail, and he was only recently released after all these years. It's a really problematic scene because a lot of it touches on xenophobia which I found completely repulsive, but I don't think it defines the music so much. I don't think it defines Mayhem. But I think the music alluded to so many tendencies towards racism that I found it to be conflicted to the point where I think what I realised is that these guys were so young, they were really anti-Christian because they were living in Norway in this really muddy society and they thought their country was built on Paganism and they were returning to Paganism. So they started burning Christian churches, and the whole thing of church burning started to become a big story in Norway in the '80s and '90s. There was a book about it called *Lords of Chaos*. **RT:** Doesn't seem to be very Pagan to burn churches? **TM:** They thought Christianity was something of a capitalist takeover of their world. I think it was sort of the thought process of long-haired kids in Norway listening to records and getting into the iconography of satanism so it gets confused, but the way they present themselves in this Viking manner is explained by Necrobutcher in this book. A lot of it has to do with complete expression of this feeling of wanting to be isolationist, if not being completely anihilationist. So they started getting into this commentary about nature and how true nature is, subsequently there has been all these academic studies and books published on black metal and nature. **EP:** Nature, death, disappearing, disintegration. Also there has been a huge art movement, a lot of people have taken bands like this and Sun O))) and employed them in their work. **TM:** For me it was just when I saw the book in Norway, because I had heard about it, I had told Eva about it and she found it in a tiny little corporate record store in Norway. **EP:** They only did a very small print run and now they are doing it again with Thurston's foreword and they are launching it again. Since then we met with the publishers and authors and we are redoing it. But it will look pretty much the same, I am really in love with the way it looks and feels. It will be published in English and in Norwegian. Thurston is actually a Norwegian name, it's Thor. You fit right in over there. **TM:** Whatever enthusiasm I have for black metal as a subculture are primarily musical. **RT:** Did you meet a lot of NBM fans out in Norway? **TM:** Yeah, I mean Peter Beste is a renowned photographer who published a book called *True Norwegian Black Metal*, and that was an incredible book of photos that he took. And he's a young guy from California. He just did a book on the Houston rap

scene. He's a reporter on contemporary subcultures. We were touring on Norway when I found this book, and there just happened to be a black metal fest at the same time in Bergen. **EP:** I didn't go. I was too afraid. **T:** I went for a couple of hours after we played and he was there and he introduced me to a lot of the guys. It was interesting for me to be there at this nexus of the scene. I would say it was 75% male. I was expecting it to be like 99% but there's kind of an interesting female contingent within the black metal scene. **RT:** What was the atmosphere like? Sometimes those places are very violent, but sometimes they are surprisingly lovely. **TM:** Everybody is very polite. Norway is not an impoverished country. These people are quite privileged and in a way by tapping into this lifestyle I think it's a way of kind of glamorous degradation that goes on. **EP:** Did you know about this phenomenon last year, this animated Disney film called Frozen? **RT:** Uh yeah **EP:** Norway is like that. It's so beautiful. When they do anything traditional it looks like that. You pass the shops where dresses like that are sold, everybody is looked after and taken care of. The black metal scene is not something you can get to witness when you are walking around Norway. It's a very rich part of the culture right now. **RT:** So it's all on the outskirts of the city. **EP:** Yes. You have to go out and find it. It's like if you're walking around Oxford Circus you wouldn't find Rough Trade. I mean this record store called Hell was... **TM:** Most of its stock was blown up by a man who has a store called Neseblod which means nosebleed.**RT:** So who took the photos in the book? **EP:** Mainly the band. **TM:** It's interesting in a way. The most direct inspiration for black metal in Norway is England. They were listening to bands like Venom. It's not even new wave British heavy metal, not like Sabbath. Then they took that to a new extreme. These guys are having the time of their lives. They were very attractive to a lot of lonely kids.

The Death Archives: Mayhem 1984-94 by Jørn "Necrobutcher" Stubberud with Svein Strømmen & photo-editor Christian Belgauxis released 25th April 2016 and published by Ecstatic Peace Library.

It's interesting in a way. The most direct inspiration for black metal in Norway is England. They were listening to bands like Venom. It's not even new wave British heavy metal, not like Sabbath. Then they took that to a new extreme.

Each month, Jonathan Richman will answer a question posed to him by fans and readers of Rough Trade Magazine. Got a question for Jonathan? Send to liv@roughtrade.com with the subject line ASK JONATHAN. Illustration by Brecht Vandenbroucke.

ASK JONATHAN: THE INTERNET

When trying to get in touch with Jonathan Richman, we found out that in no way would he ever submit to doing anything, ANYTHING for online. A kind woman called Debbie at Blue Arrow records sent him a letter asking him to be in our magazine. He replied offering his services as something of an agony aunt. He wants to do this because "fans ask different questions from what journalists ask." Here he is...

Rough Trade Magazine: "Jonathan, why do you hate the internet?"

"I don't have much to do with the Internet. So far, I still don't know how to use a computer. Why would I need one? What are they good for? Finding information, yes? And finding it quickly?

O.K. but I don't need to find out most things quickly. I like to find things out slowly, gradually. I'm actually a slow learner and my particular brain doesn't seem to do well with rapid input. And what do I need to know that I can't find out through books, a radio, my friends or sitting in silence?

Look, ever since I was a little kid I couldn't bear sitting still for very long. I've always wanted to move, to run! To walk! I learn just by walking! I learn from hearing the wind and things. And on a hot day, especially, you can't keep me inside! Let me out! I want to feel the hot sun! That's what I love to do when I'm at home. I don't even like TV. We don't have one. Why would I want a plastic screen in the house? And to have to sit down in front of it? And fiddle with all of those complicated controls!?

I mean, FORGET IT!

But I'm not a nostalgic. I don't want to go back to any past era. I'm happy to be alive right now. The challenges of the year 2016 are enormous and scary and as far as I can tell, this world could change very fast. However it turns out, it promises to be adventurous, to say the least.

I've lost touch with various old friends. I know people who know how to use the internet and once in a while I've thought how, if I put their names in to search for 'em, I could probably find 'em. But I don't want to get in touch in such a way after 30 years. I'd rather leave the meeting in the charge of the heavens. I'd rather not know if or when I'll ever see them again and then be surprised by suddenly "Oh! There you are!" That's just the way I like to do things.

So many of my close friends and family not only work in electronic media but write the manuals, make the circuitry, software and products for it that we all just laugh about how I don't use this stuff.

So I don't curse the internet. Not at all. I just don't want to use it myself.

But speaking of things electronic would you do me a favour? Please don't buy any of my recordings on Amazon.com or whatever other companies are out there like them. I'd rather not have you buy them at all. Please buy them, if you are inclined to, at a real record store.

Listen, I know you're probably going to have to use a computer to get my records because there are almost no record stores left. So if you can't walk to one anymore, I get it. But at least look up a record store and buy from them instead of the easy way, O.K? Because "the easy way" spells the end for intimate dusty little record stores and bookstores and I get so sad thinking of a world without those places.

I mean, I really don't know what I'll do. I won't get a computer. I won't get a cellphone (although, since there are almost no more pay phones left in the U.S.A. I may someday get one of those "go-phones" to throw under the seat in the van in case we have to be towed and we are 180 miles away from the nearest town in Nevada or something.) But I really don't know what I'll do.

As for me, give me an ancient wooden plank floor bookstore or a musty, hidden, silent, spooky movie theatre with maroon velvet seats that squeak."

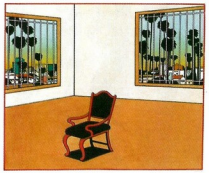
Rough Trade's resident graphic design student Lucy Bourton guides us through this month's noteworthy album artwork

PETER BRODERICK *Music For Confluence*
(Erased Tapes)

Each of Peter Broderick's releases are highly anticipated, but this particular record is a must have, finally pressed onto vinyl since it's release in 2011. A soundtrack to accompany the documentary *Confluence*, Broderick's music perfectly represents the mystery behind five disappearances in Idaho from 1979 to 1982. The record sleeve reflects this sense of unease immaculately, designed by Erased Tapes founder, Robert Raths and the photographs featured were also taken by Broderick himself. These images of flawless suburbia used display the normality of the areas the soundtrack reflects. In their beauty there is an eeriness. This record exhibits how film and music can enhance one another, in order to achieve a remarkable release such as this.

QUILT *Plaza*
(Mexican Summer)

The cover for Quilt's third release, *Plaza* is the ultimate representation of the hazily calming music they play. Forming at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, each of Quilt's sleeves have been thoughtfully considered. Yet, the balance between the simplistic and rich design of *Plaza* sets it apart from others. It is also accompanied by an admirably designed tape which you need to get hold of. Using a print by L.A artist Ken Price, Quilt set the scene of a lazy afternoon to listen to this album. I basically just want to sit in that chair, listening to *Eliot St* on repeat.



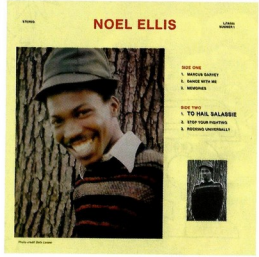
SLEEVIES

BLACK MOUNTAIN *IV*
(Jagjaguwar)

IV is Black Mountain's first studio album in six years and displays a band able to produce heavy music with moments of calm interspersed. The use of collage on the sleeve reflects this by displaying the layers of influences that have created a cohesive natural whole. Previously, snippets of the album have been hinted at alongside crops of the sleeve, almost showing how the album was built together. This release also comes with an exclusive Rough Trade bonus CD of five raw, demo tracks and is available on orange, white or black vinyl.

NOEL ELLIS *Noel Ellis*
(Light In The Attic)

This latest release by Seattle label Light In the Attic celebrates 10 years of an impressive roster of reissues. Noel Ellis' self titled album from 1983 is a collection of upbeat reggae and dub that has become a treasure amongst enthusiasts. This reissue includes original artwork, featuring photography by Beth Lesser, who's vivid colour photographs of the Reggae movement are a must see. The record design has been expanded into a Stoughton gatefold, including further archived photographs and linear notes by Kevin "Sipreano" Howes, producer and experienced crate-digger. Light In The Attic display the importance of reissues, discovering rare records in their original glory and making them available to a wider and very enthusiastic audience.



Being Aries myself I'm a bit sceptical about astrology but you Pisceans need a dominant partner or role model in your life or self pity and self destruction come galloping over your psychic horizon, so I'm going to lay it on the line with all the authority that rocks flying about in space can conjure up.

O.K. you "oversensitive, indecisive, self pitying, lazy escapists" (copyright some random website), let's start with romance. You know as well as I do that fish people tend to be drawn to losers, so if you are looking for love why not shell out on that digital detox weekend you read about in the *Observer* colour supplement recently. Plenty of fodder for your inclinations one would have thought.

There are also strong signs suggesting possible assignations in foreign climes, although with your tendency to escape from reality you should have little trouble in turning a squalid club toilet-based episode into a veritable continental Kismet.

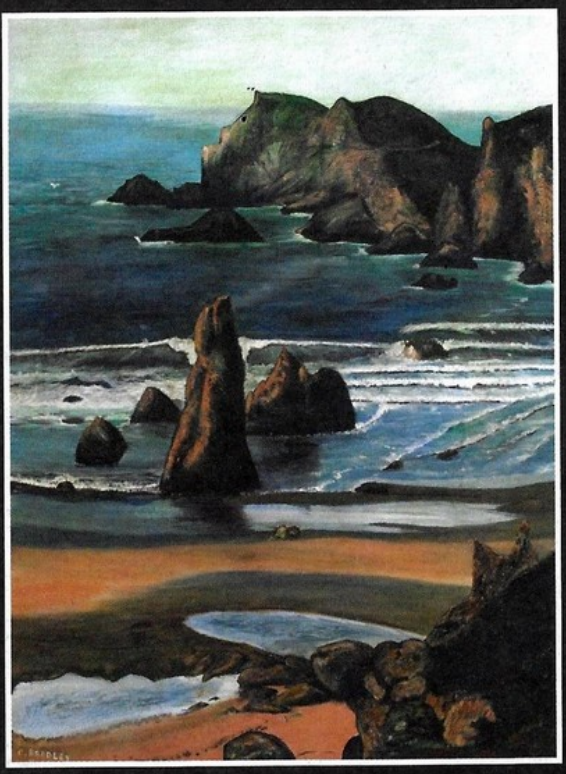
Next, you "fearful, overly trusting victims and martyrs" (copyright a different random website), let's get down to business. Your need to take on the problems of others could be just what's needed to spur you on when it comes to writing that self-help best seller that lurks within you. Failing that, why not tap into another of your Piscean traits – namely inherent musical talent – and write one of those earnest over-wrought ballads that seem to be a pleasingly jingling musical cash cow at the moment. Either option could provide you with an opportunity to turn your stream of fridge magnet platitudes and aphorisms into a stream of income.

And finally, all you "vague, weak-willed and easily led" (copyright a third random website) seekers of truth through planetary alignment, keep on turning to any cosmic crumbs of comfort that come your way in an increasingly uncertain world, it will feed your illusion of perceived happiness and it will keep a bevy of showbiz charlatans in the lifestyle to which they've become accustomed.

Illustration by Adam Higton

THE HOROSCOPE BY ANDREW WEATHERALL

Adam Higton,
Andrew Weatherall,
Ben Monaghan,
Brecht
Vandenbroucke,
Bruce Usher,
Cait Oppermann,
Craig Taylor,
Dan Richards,



Daniel Brereton, Dav Stewart,
Delia Sparrow, Gregory Adams,
Jack Sachs, Jennilee Marigomen,
Jeremy Leslie, John Webb,
Jonathan Richman, Light in the Attic,
Liv Siddall, Lucy Bourton,
Martha Sprackland, Mat Hart,
Mica Levi, Patrick O'Malley,
Rough Trade Staff,
Simon Russell, Tim Noakes,
Will Burns & Yann Le Bec.